

SEPTEMBER, 1935

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The American MUSIC LOVER

A REVIEW FOR THE MODERN HOME

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for September

1935

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The American Music Lover, General Offices: 12 East 22nd Street, New York, N. Y.

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*To my friend
Peter Hough Reed
with best wishes
to the
American Music Center*

DR. JAMES FRANCIS COOKE

Editor of
The Etude Music Magazine

Getting the Most Out of Radio and Records

BY JAMES FRANCIS COOKE

JUST last week I met a man who had in the last ten years spent nearly fifteen hundred dollars for radios and talking machines. He had a library of records that must have cost him about eight or nine hundred dollars. He enjoyed these things hugely, as he properly should, but he said, "My friend, who is a musician, seems to get a lot more fun out of his radio than I do."

The reason is very obvious. Our keenest delight comes from those things about which we know the most. True, one does not have to be a botanist to enjoy a flower garden, nor does one have to be an astronomer to feel the thrill of the infinite ocean of stars in the firmament, but have you ever noticed how much greater the love for the garden becomes with the individual who gets into the actual work of caring for the plants and blooms with his own hands? The comparison might be applied to any kind of sport — let us say, baseball. You may enjoy a professional game of baseball, but if you have ever knocked a ball around the back lots with the boys, you will enjoy it that much more. As a youth I played football, tennis and lacrosse, and revelled in them, but I never played baseball and when I go to a professional game I look with pathetic regret upon the great joy of hundreds of others who, because they know so much more about it, get so much more fun from seeing the game.

Rewards of Participation

In a recent conference with Hendrik Willem van Loon, the famous historian-geographer, who is also an excellent musician, he said, "I take ten times as much joy from hearing a concerted number on the radio as the average listener, largely because I have played that very piece in

a symphonic orchestra. Unless one understands the art and is able to play, one's enjoyment is always restricted. Perhaps another comparison might be this. Suppose you went to hear a great foreign actress such as was Sarah Bernhardt. Unless you understand the French language, all that you could get would be the pantomime, the scenery and the charm of her wonderful voice. Other than that, you would have some job making out what it was all about. That is the position of the average radio listener when he hears a piece of fine music."

The radio and the talking machine have come as a great blessing to those who have never had a musical training. Through a similar source, Dr. Charles H. Mayo, the famous physician who never studied music, gets keen joy for nearly an hour each day in manipulating an automatic player organ. But at the same time he states most emphatically that he is losing a great deal by his musical ignorance and that if he had his life to live over again, he would certainly want practical music study to become a part of it. There are scores of prominent men who have come to the same realization.

Children and Music

Now, you may rightfully ask, "What are you going to do about it?" Sensible people will do all they can to see that every child (except in rare cases where music is obviously inhibited because of physical or mental limitations) receives a practical training in music, not with a view to becoming a professional musician, but with the idea of getting more fun and profit out of life from a broader understanding of the most widely employed art of modern times and this training can only come through work. There is no getting around that. In ancient Nuremberg they used to poke fun at educational

methods that dodged work by suggesting that a hole be drilled in the student's head, a funnel inserted and the knowledge poured in out of a can. Many old cartoons show this famous Nuremberg funnel (*Nuremberger Trichter*).

The funnel method is one of the evils of our universities patronized by rich men's sons. These young men have an idea that all they have to do is to sit submissively by and have knowledge injected into lazy, empty skulls. Active participation is the basis of all educational progress.

James G. Huneker, who was the first Editor of *The Etude*, well said to me in his rare, witty manner, "The difference between being able to perform a piece of music and so-called musical appreciation is the difference between kissing a pretty girl and watching someone else kiss her."

Never Too Old To Learn

Many adults who do not know music and do not play fail to realize that while it is best for the student to start music in early years, there is really no reason why one should not begin music study at any time. I would not hesitate to start today to learn any musical instrument, just as I would not hesitate to learn a new foreign language. In music I would be enormously inspired and assisted by the radio and the talking machine. For records can assist one greatly. In line with this, let me tell a story.

Some years ago in Paris I went to a performance of *Madame Butterfly* at the *Opéra Comique*. The prima donna, Tapolis Isang, was billed as "the great Japanese soprano." Her success was extraordinary. As the Director of the *Monnaie Theatre* in Brussels had requested me to meet her, I went behind the scenes, and after a short conversation in French, she said in excellent English, "But you are an American, are you not? I am an American too. I am not Japanese but a Filipino. I was trained in the American schools. It was there that I ran across talking machine records of the best known operas, sung by the world renowned singers. I had studied music, but my only vocal training in the Philippines was in

imitating these records with the scores of the operas in my hands. When I came to study with European teachers they were amazed with the manner in which I had acquired the roles. More than this, I did not have one version of one teacher, but that of many different real interpreters of the art."

There is no question that records have vast educational value: not merely in voice or in orchestra, but in the piano as well. The fine modern records of Fisher, Cortot, Hambourg, Paderewski, Rachmanninoff and others are now being widely used to supplement pianoforte courses in all parts of the world. But, because mere imitation will never assist a student to become a truly great artist, it is always best to supplement one's aural training from records with the advice and guidance of an eminent teacher.

Having been an enthusiastic devotee of those amazing instruments — the radio and the talking machine — ever since I first encountered them, and having owned numerous and many kinds, I can testify to the great joy they have brought to my life. What a dreary world this was, relatively speaking, sans radio, sans talking machine, and its wonderful recordings.

Such a magazine as *The American Music Lover* is invaluable to all who are interested in these wonderful modern inventions which have expanded our life interests so splendidly.

In connection with participation in music, Dr. Cooke, in an editorial in *The Etude* last year, pertinently pointed out:

"The unit of what we are proud to call American standards of living is unquestionably the American home. Even those Americans whose ancestral roots reach back to those parts of the European continent where there is no comprehensive equivalent of the English word 'home' — where most functions and activities are held outside of the house, at restaurants, beer gardens, parks and theatres — must realize that in our American system the larger prosperity of our industrial and agricultural life depends upon the home as a unit. If we abandon the American home, we must abandon the American standards of living and character

"Therefore one of the very first responsibilities of American parenthood is that of making the

(Continued on Page 156)

The Missa Solemnis

By PHILIP BARR

BEETHOVEN'S *Missa Solemnis* is not so far a favorite with the general concert-going public. This is not surprising. In the first place, even the most indefatigable concert-goer seldom hears it more than twice in a decade — for its difficulties are enough to make all choirs and conductors fight shy of it—and, in the second place, those difficulties which it offers to the performer are nearly all equalled by those which it offers to the listener. Never was there a work which demanded more hearings and received less.

Most of us are quite ignorant of the *Missa Solemnis*; as ignorant as our great-grandparents were of Bach's *B Minor Mass*. Matters are not improved by the writers of text-books, most of whom seem to know as little about the question as anybody else. For most of them repeat the same parrot-like cries: the *Missa* is a great work marred in the making — it does not begin to be any good until after the *Gloria*, etc., etc. One might imagine that most writers were less acquainted with the music than with one another's writings on the subject.

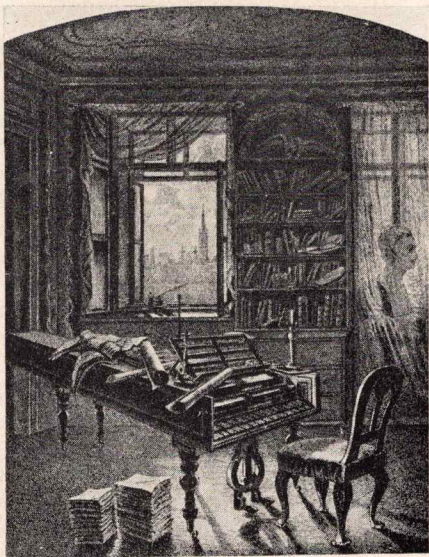
Singers Like the Work

Those who have taken part in a performance of the *Missa*, tell a different tale. Many place it on a level with the *B Minor Mass*, to the scandal of the faithful. But that is not how it strikes the general listener at first hearing. And if I have brought in the Bach work at this point, it is because that work plays a greater part than is generally supposed in putting the general listener off Beethoven.

Bach and Beethoven! How long those two have been compared, and how foolishly. For, never did two composers mix worse, the proper mood for enjoying the one being the worst mood for enjoying the other. Because they both are so great, and

because there is a "B" in both — there is nothing to choose between the two reasons. "The two big Masses!" says the general listener. "Well, I've heard the one — now I'm going to hear the other." So off he goes to the *Missa Solemnis* with his head full of the *B Minor Mass*. No wonder he comes away frustrated and bewildered.

• Bach is much easier to listen to than is generally admitted. You can derive great pleasure from Bach with a minimum amount of attention. Naturally, more attention brings more pleasure. But there is hardly a bit in Bach that is not impressive by itself, without regard to context, which explains his appeal to those who listen none too attentively. But with Beethoven, it is different. His music demands greater and closer attention, because it is always the design first and foremost — the bits are often, considered separately, unattractive — so the inatten-



Beethoven's Studio in Vienna where much of the *Missa* was created.

tive listener, who loses the thread is badly off. In the case of the *Missa Solemnis*, this is particularly true, for here the design is most unusual and the texture is often especially hard on the ear (owing to Beethoven's uncouth vocal effects). (Note that the extremely popular works of Beethoven are all familiar ones. An unfamiliar work by Beethoven, like the *Missa Solemnis*, is generally harder to grasp than an unfamiliar one of Bach).

An Unusual Design

With regard to the design of the *Missa Solemnis* as a whole, there is the one thing about it that imposes a particular strain on the listener at first (though it may become a source of added joy later on). The *Missa* is divided into five large sections, instead of twenty-four little ones, as is the *B Minor Mass*, and it contains the most complicated dovetailing of soloists and chorus, whereas Bach's work keeps them entirely separate: a section being for chorus or for soloists. One of the most disconcerting facts about the Beethoven work on a first hearing is the fact that you never know when the one is going to break in on the other.

But the most common grievances voiced against the *Missa Solemnis* are: it is poor choral music; it is not like Beethoven and it is not good religious music.

With regard to the first of these: Beethoven's cruel writing for the voices has a lot to answer for. There are the awkward jumps, for example, suitable only for instruments, and there are the long phrases on repeated high notes (the most outrageous of these is in the *Gloria* section, where the sopranos have to scream the words "*sedes ad dexteram patris*" on six high B flats followed by a drop of a semitone and another of a tenth), and then, there are the awkward arrangement of syllables. But — and this is a big but — much of the grumbling that goes on about the *Missa's* bad choral writing is for a very different reason. It is because Bach has given the listener the expectation of polyphony, and Beethoven is largely homophonic. And when he is polyphonic, his polyphony is unlike Bach's. Bach is

gigantic, but he is smooth. Beethoven, on the other hand, is jagged, declamatory: big blocks of tone are hurled at the listener. And although people like that when he does it in orchestral music, they are outraged when he does it in choral music. It is as though a string quartet were to start playing *col legno*.

Another thing, Bach's choral music in the *B Minor Mass*, although not a *capella*, nevertheless has its roots in a *capella*. We can imagine it without orchestra, for we can give most of our attention to the chorus (and this is what people seem generally to expect to do in listening to choral music); but if we do this with the Beethoven *Missa*, we come to grief, for the orchestra is much more independent than in the Bach work. There are long passages, it is true, where it doubles the chorus, notably in the fugues, but they are not in the majority.

What Repetitions Reveal

Repeated hearings of the *Missa Solemnis* reveal a style of choral writing which is unconventional but stirring. The great fugue *Et vitam* is a good enough answer to those who think Beethoven could not manage his polyphony. But for the kind of effect which is especially his own (and for which you may look in vain in the Bach *Mass*), there is the first part of the *Credo*, with its great climax and its descent in octaves on *Deo vero*, the *Resurrexit* with its racing accompaniment on the violins and violas, the *Benedictus* (especially the opening and the close), the electrifying *Presto* in triple time which winds up the *Quoniam* (at the end of the much-attacked *Gloria* section), and the "War" passage in the *Agnus Dei*, which is declamatory

choral writing at its greatest.

It is no use to listen to these things with one's head full of Bach and Palestrina. Bach, we must remember, came at the end of a great age of polyphonic choral music; his roots stretch back through Schuetz and Palestrina to the early Flemings. But during the years between the latter's death and Beethoven's maturity, this tradition had died. By the end of the 18th Century, (Haydn, Mozart and Cherubini notwith-

standing), choral polyphony was very much at a discount. For Beethoven, therefore, to have tried to turn the clock back would have been, in his case, an extremely false move; hence, he pursued his own natural bent in his choral writing.

As for the contention that the *Missa Solemnis* does not sound like Beethoven, we may point out that it is always difficult to spot an old acquaintance in a new dress, and the voice is an unusual dress for Beethoven. At the same time, it must be remembered the *Missa* is late Beethoven — the Beethoven of the last quartets, very different from the Beethoven of the *Fifth Symphony*.

Its Otherworldliness

One symptom of the work's being in his so-called third or last style is the demands made on the performers. Beethoven became less and less considerate of the actual physical sound of his music as time went on. There is also the completely different psychological atmosphere which one gets in his later music, the unusual and more intricate design, and what is often referred to as his quietism, his otherworldliness and remoteness from the strife and drama of his earlier works. Those who have studied the music of Beethoven's last period soon find out that there is nothing negative about his mood. For there is an ecstasy in these *quiet* passages that is more intense than all the excitement of his second period. (I instance the last pages of the *Agnus Dei* and, above all, the *Et Incarnatus* with its infinitely touching flute obbligato). They also find out something else: that the old lion has not forgotten how to roar and that when he wishes to he does so with more shattering effect than ever. (I instance the *Quoniam*—and so on to the end of the *Gloria* section. And again the "War" portions of the *Agnus Dei*).

The contention that the *Missa* is not good religious music is made with especial obstinacy. As a fact, this music sounds very unorthodox. Bach's *B Minor Mass* may seem (compared to Palestrina, for instance), theologically heterogeneous — a mixture of Catholic and Protestant — but it does convey the idea of the Christian Church. The *Missa*, on the other hand, does not even do this. A great deal of it

sounds almost operatic, notably the declamatory parts I have mentioned, and the almost unendurably poignant *Crucifixus*, which many people feel is too personal, too restless in spirit.

Further back, in speaking of choral polyphony, I said that Bach came at the end of a great choral period and was able to inherit the tradition, whilst Beethoven — the tradition having been broken in the meantime — had to evolve a new personal style. I assert that the situation is analogous, with respect to religion. Bach came at the end of a great age of faith; he himself believed, and thus he could express himself in the confines of the church. But Beethoven came at the end of an age of doubt — Voltaire and the French Revolution lay behind him — and for a man of his temperament it was necessary to evolve a personal religion; in that sense he was intensely religious. The *Missa Solemnis* may not be church music in the accepted sense, but it is certainly religious music; even at its most bizarre and operatic (though it is never *literally* operatic) it is always spiritual and sublime.

Poetic Passages

Passages of special tenderness and exaltation are the *Christe Eleison*, the *Qui tollis* (one of the best, this, and yet it comes in the much despised *Gloria* section), the *Et Incarnatus*, the *Benedictus* and the first part of the *Agnus Dei*. And as for the *Crucifixus*, surely this comes closer to the original text than even Bach's lofty and wonderful chorus! The final outcry of the tenor on *Passus* is the very voice of the suffering Christ.

The "War" passage in the *Agnus Dei*, even to those who admit its power as music, often seems out of place in a religious work; but I say that it comes closer in spirit to the origins of Christianity than most of even the greatest of Church music. The solemn, august opening of the *Credo* is something with which nobody has found fault. A Roman Catholic friend has pointed out to me that here Beethoven is actually more orthodox than Bach — in the way that he

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The Growth of Mozart's Genius

And Its Implication in the C Major and G Minor Quintets

BY PETER HUGH REED

I.

MOZART was a boy prodigy; and, like all juvenile geniuses, he was the object of an undue amount of exploitation, adoration and petting. People spoilt him because of his genius. His childhood was spent in touring Europe with his father — performing before royalty — making music wherever he travelled at the request or demand of those who could afford to pay for it — the socially elect.

During the early years, however, with all the adulation of his elders, there must have been times when Mozart resented his father's dominating hand and the exploitation of his genius — and the constant demand to make music. For, even though he was aware of his great talent and music flowed easily from beneath his fingers, he must have had his moments when he yearned for the freedom and the privileges accorded an ordinary child, to be free, to play — like other children — when and where he wanted. We can imagine that thought, that wish asserting itself. Often, when music called, it is possible he felt such an urge. We can even imagine him wanting to run wild with the urchins in the street upon occasion, and to be able for a change to make grimaces at the socially elect who petted and coddled him and, at the same time, demanded that he make music for their enjoyment.

As a child, however, this aspiration for freedom did not affect him deeply. He did not awaken to its import until later, and he did not realize it fully then, although it helped retard his inner growth. For his future during those early youthful years loomed brightly before him. The sun at high noon could not be anything but brilliant! How could it be otherwise? Did

not people call him a genius — a *kleines Hexenkind*? Indeed, there was every reason for him to look forward to a brilliant and happy future.

"He only felt the weight of the paternal yoke," says Henri Ghéon, his latest biographer, "the day that fate momentarily lifted it from him." This was in his twenty-second year, at which time there was every reason for him to realize it, for he had come face to face with man's disloyalty and sadism.

With the advent of manhood, Mozart learned the world was not so kindly disposed toward the grown musician as they had been toward the boy prodigy. He discovered among other things enemies in his own profession, and the disloyalty and superficiality of high society. This, of course, had its effect upon his mind and work: it created a certain bitterness which he could not immediately purify in the crucible of his genius. That early longing for freedom, which was never fulfilled, began to manifest itself in other ways. And so, all his life, that submerged side of his childhood, that early aspiration, which he never realized as such, grew and was augmented by other things. A melancholic note, a yearning quality in his music can be traced to this.

It is quite possible, as life altered for Mozart in manhood, that he looked back on his childhood and told himself that it had been good. The man in forgetting the aspirations of juvenility, is quite unaware that they may have made their mark. Of course, a matured sense of proportions adjusted childhood impulses: at heart, however, Mozart was always that child — yearning for something he had never known — yearning subconsciously for a freedom of soul his genius had denied

him. Yearning undoubtedly to free himself from an artfulness fostered upon him at the very dawn of life.

2.

CONJECTURES on the development of creative genius are sometimes regarded as extraneous. And, even though they may emanate from some comprehension and study of psychology, many people will be inclined to regard them as superfluous. When we endeavor to explain certain points in a work of art from a psychological premise, we are imposing in part our own deductions upon our readers. In an article, these can only be outlined. For, it would take a comprehensive volume to explain fully such psychological inter-



A picture of Mozart made during his last years in Vienna.

pretation, and, since we are not writing a book, we can only touch upon the significance of our interpretation here and leave the reader to judge for himself its relative value or verity.

This inner yearning, this melancholic note, which we believe emanated from Mozart's arrested youth, can be traced through his music from childhood upward. It is one of the things that probably first drove him into himself—to seek to know the meaning, the reason for life and its impulse which to him expressed itself in

music. We find it superficially present in the *Adagio* section of his *Violin Concerto in D*, for example, written in 1776, when he was ten years of age, for Princess Adelaide of France. Here it manifests itself in a tender wistfulness. It grows, however, as he matures. Inevitably, it asserts itself when he is in reverie — mostly in the slower sections of his music, although it frequently intrudes upon the more energetic speech of his sonata movements and is often present in his minuets. In the famous six string quartets, dedicated to his revered friend, Haydn, it is deeply eloquent in its sustained emotional beauty.

This depth of feeling in Mozart was probably one of the dominating influences which made Haydn exclaim to Mozart's father: "I declare to you before God as a man of honor, that your son is the greatest composer that I know . . ." For it was something which Haydn did not possess.

In the late works, like the *Quintets in C Major and G Minor* and in the *Symphony* in the same key, in the *Ave Verum*, and in the *Requiem*, to name but a few outstanding examples, this yearning has grown into a tragic note of rarest resignation.

3.

IN his *In Search of Mozart*, Henri Ghéon terms Mozart's *Quintet in G Minor* (K516) "a song of death." This work, he contends, "goes to the very depths of the mysterious." The shadow of death, he finds, hovers over it, because Mozart wrote, in a letter to his dying father the month before he conceived the work, that he had familiarized himself for some years past "with that true and faithful friend of man," and in so doing had found "peace and consolation."

" . . . I thank God for giving me the opportunity, you know what I mean (a reference to *Freemasonry*), of learning to look upon death as the key which unlocks the gates of true bliss. I never lie to rest without thinking that, young as I am, before the dawn of another day I may be no more; and yet nobody who knows me would call me morose and discontented. I thank my Creator every day for this blessing, and wish from my heart I could share it with my fellow creatures."

This allusion to death on Mozart's part may be interpreted in different ways. To some, it may mean nothing, while to others it may imply a great deal. It can be interpreted as the result of an inner yearning or again as the philosophical reactions of a mind submerged in mysticism.

Although, there is no specific proof that Mozart yearned for death, we do know however he anticipated it; and the last four years of his life found him creating with a force and conviction greater than he had shown before, as though he wanted to reassure himself as well as others that his creative genius could not terminate.

"In his radiant joy of life, in his splendid awareness," wrote Alec Robertson recently in *The Gramophone*, "without a hint of morbidity, of the inevitability of death, who spoke to him as the friend in Schubert's great song, we have the key to the exquisite balance of Mozart's art (*that is the art of the C Major and G Minor Quintets*): the secret which prevents him from falling into triviality, however well-worn the language he employs."

This inner yearning or acceptance, as you will, which provides "the key to the balance of his art," at this time is interesting to trace. We have long felt it emanated from an unrealized aspiration for freedom in his childhood, for, psychologically, such an unfulfilled desire formed in early youth later might well metamorphosize in this manner.

The growth of a man is governed by many things. Adversity, hardship, disappointment, constraint, are among the things that contribute to it. Pessimism and bitterness frequently retard growth; but an honest love of life and a genuine admiration for its manifold beauties usually negate these and assist — particularly the creative artist — in the reassertion of his expansion. Mozart knew all these things — he knew bitterness and pessimism because of disappointments, adversity and constraint. But his genius did not betray him. For his great subjective urge was toward beauty and its manifold magnificence.

Several years ago, Sidney Grew, in an article on the significance of the *G Minor*

Quintet, pointed out that Mozart "became in early manhood superficially sophisticated, and the only thing that kept him from becoming radically sophisticated was his wit and humor, his powers of analytical observation, and his love of material beauty in sound, — that, and the love he gave to and received from his father, mother, and sister, and in due course his wife."

The full inner development of Mozart, or the "natural spiritual development," as Grew would have it — did not arrive until he was thirty. "Not until late in life," writes Mr. Grew, "did he become vitally (that is, creatively) aware of the mysteries of existence that are to be discovered and revealed only by the imaginative activities of the soul. He was at times almost a materialist. But the soul of the supreme creative artist was in him, and it was equally inevitable that in the end he would attain a complete spiritual freedom, and that with the growth of such a healthiness in him there would come a change in his art. Before the change could be effected, however, there had to be a purging of his nature (or a *regeneration of the things that had outwardly and inwardly disturbed him in life*). Everything in his emotional life of a repressive, personally distressing kind had to be got rid of through the medium of his art."

The manifestation of this growth or regeneration was tremendous in its import and its revelation. Exactly where it takes place, we are as yet not fully decided. Grew, would have us accept it full inception in the *G Minor Quintet*. If this is true, we must admit its implication — more than in part — in the *C Major Quintet*, (K.515), which was created first.

The latter work was composed two weeks after the letter Mozart wrote to his father (quoted above), and a month earlier than the *G Minor Quintet*. Hence, we can credit the inspiration for both works to the same source. Whether we accept them as "songs of death" is irrelevant, to our way of thinking, to our ap-

(Continued on Page 155)

The Library Shelf

Book Reviews

TOVEY: *Essays In Musical Analysis*, Volumes One and Two. Oxford University Press. Price \$4.00 a volume.

RARELY does one encounter notes on music as illuminating and learned as these. One reads, if greatly interested in music, a good deal of platitudes and sentimental nonsense on that art, as well as a lot of cut-and-dried copy, which seeks to measure with a verbal yardstick the form and technique of a composition for the enlightenment of uninformed or casual readers. Program annotations are generally of two species: too technical for the music loving multitudes or too florid or fatuous for the musician and the scholar. Rarely is a happy medium realized. And when it is, it is generally accomplished by someone who has not attained an universal reputation with concert-goers. For the real music thinker, the one who comprehends, not alone by research but by participation in the art, has little time to exploit himself far and wide or to seek or obtain publicity.

Sir Donald Francis Tovey, who achieves in his *Essays In Musical Analysis* that rarely happy medium, is little known in this country except among scholars and probably not as widely known in his own country as he should be. Yet no man deserves better to be known. For, no man knows more about music than he. This is no exaggerated statement, but an unanimously admitted fact by all who know whereof they speak.

Sir Donald is one of the best informed and versatile of musicians and music thinkers, and he writes on music in a most interesting and imaginative manner. And whether one agrees with him fully or not, one will find his understanding of the music under hand, his unflagging interest in its message and his engaging

manner of writing a stimulating and enlightening experience. The information contained in these notes is of a rare order.

The history of these annotations is a testimony to the high calibre of their author. They were written as program notes for concerts of the Reid Orchestra of Edinburgh, of which he is not only the conductor, but also the founder. This remarkable man, now in his sixtieth year, has participated in music since early manhood, and has long been acknowledged as one of England's most outstanding pianists and conductors, as well as one of her most talented composers. Appointed Reid Professor of Music at Edinburgh University in 1914, he did a remarkable thing three years later by forming the "Reid Orchestra of local orchestra players and students, as a concert-giving organization and an essential part of the course for degrees in music at Edinburgh University." Recently, as a reward for his services to music in Great Britain, he was knighted by his King.

As a teacher and exponent of his art, Sir Donald is regarded in England with great affection and esteem. And it is in this field of late years that his activities have been most conscientiously and unselfishly developed.

The present two volumes are the first of an intended series on the various forms of music. They are given up to the analysis of symphonies and other orchestral compositions. The third book in the series, of which there will be five, will be devoted to concertos. It will be released in the near future.

Sir Donald speaks of the technical side of the music he discusses, but, as he says in his preface which fully explains this terminology — "So long as the reader finds a consistent meaning in my use of terms, he need not worry about musical

terminology." And, although these annotations may be said to be written primarily for the experienced concert-goer and the scholar, they nevertheless offer a rich reward for any musically interested person. For they are unquestionably one of the finest contributions of their kind to musical education that have been published in recent years.

Sir Donald's excursion through the famous *Nine* of Beethoven alone is worth investigating. He begins by telling us that the *First* "is a fitting farewell to the 18th Century." "Its style," he contends, "is that of the Comedy of Manners, as translated by Mozart into the music of his operas and of his most light-hearted works of symphonic and chamber music. The fact that it is comedy from beginning to end is prophetic of changes in music no less profound than those which the French Revolution brought about in the social organism. But Beethoven was the most conservative of revolutionists; a Revolutionist without the "R"; and in his first symphony he shows, as has often been remarked, a characteristic caution in handling the conata form for the first time with full orchestra."

Of the *Fourth*, the *Fifth* and the *Ninth Symphonies*, Sir Donald writes judiciously. How wise is his contention that the *Fourth Symphony* "is perhaps the work in which Beethoven first fully reveals his mastery of movement," and how sensible is his refutation of the familiar statement, that the first movement of the *Fifth* is built up of the initial figure of four notes. (This, in opposition to Ernest Newman's viewpoint). "No great music has ever been built from an initial figure of four notes," he says, and — "You might as well say that every piece of music is built from an initial figure of *one* note. You may profitably say that the highest living creatures have begun from the single nucleated cell. But no ultra-microscope has yet unravelled the complexities of the single living cell; nor, if the spectroscope is to be believed, are we yet very fully informed of the complexities of a single atom of iron: and it is quite absurd to suppose that the evolution of a piece of music can proceed from 'a simple figure of four notes'

on lines in the least resembling those of nature."

The first volume of the *Essays in Musical Analysis* is devoted to the symphonies of Beethoven, Brahms, Haydn, Mozart and Schubert.

The second volume is given up to a dissertation on Beethoven's *Ninth*, in which Sir Donald outlines "Its Place in Musical Art," and notes on orchestral works by Schumann, Franck, Bruckner, Tschaikowsky, Dvorak, Roentgen, Elgar, Sibelius, Vaughan Williams, Mendelssohn, Bach, Handel, Holst and Brahms.

These two books are truly symphonic notes par excellence. We recommend them unreservedly to the attention of all music lovers.

—The Editor.

* * * *

THE NINE SYMPHONIES OF BEETHOVEN IN SCORE: Edited and Devised by Albert E. Wier. (No. 1 of the Miniature Score Series). Harcourt, Brace and Company. Price \$3.00.

APPREHENDING music by eye as well as ear helps one toward a fuller and more comprehensive enjoyment. Many musical listeners fight shy of score reading, however, because of the complexities of the instrumental lines, and the confusion occasioned by the alternation of the theme from one group of instruments to another.

In order to assist those unacquainted with the art of score reading, Albert E. Wier has conceived an ingenious plan, a system of arrow signals, so that even the novice at score reading will be able to follow the musical outline and to identify the different themes as they appear and recur.

The first of a series of books, worked out along these lines, contains all nine of Beethoven's symphonies. The second to be published in the near future, will contain the four symphonies of Brahms and the last three of Tschaikowsky.

The importance of such books as this in educational work cannot be overestimated. On the other hand, apart from their edu-

cational worth, they will be of inestimable value to the music lover. For they will help him acquire a knowledge of form, without any great effort and without detracting from the message of the music.

The arrows, which Mr. Wier has utilized, are plainly printed. They mark the various themes as they appear and alternate from one group of instruments to another. Wavy lines are used also under the themes to show their continuation and duration. Structural parts, such as the Exposition, the Development, the Recapitulation, and the Coda, etc., are also indicated.

Although one does not have to have a full knowledge of orchestration to grasp the essentials of the work with Mr. Weir's adroit system, there is no question that some study along these lines will increase one's esthetic enjoyment of the music.

The manner in which the volume is arranged is, in our estimation, particularly helpful for score reading. Four pages of the original miniature score, for example, are printed on one page. And the book

size is easy to handle, being nine by twelve inches, similar in size to most piano albums, etc.

Mr. Wier has written a short historical and critical comment, which precedes the actual score in each case. He has also stated, what he considers, the best current recording of the work. Some of his selections in this field are not in line with the general consensus of critical opinion, for example — he selects Koussevitzky's performance of Beethoven's *Fifth*, as the best extant, whereas most critics in this country and also in Europe decry this set, but this, of course, has no direct relevancy on the primary reason for the book — which is to simplify the following of an orchestral score.

In the Preface, Mr. Wier has erred in his statement that the viola is written in the Tenor clef; the viola is written in the Alto clef.

All in all, this book can only incite unqualified praise for simplifying for the many — what has long been considered only for a select few — score reading.

—Paul Girard

A FESTIVAL OF AMERICAN MUSIC

An Announcement

For the encouragement of original compositions in America, The Westminster Choir School takes pleasure in inviting American composers to submit original compositions for a festival of five programs to be held during the days of May 18, 19, and 20, 1936, in Princeton, N. J.

Composers are invited to submit compositions of five classes:

First—Violin and piano — Viola and piano — Violoncello, and piano — and Piano solo.

Second—String quartet.

Third—Organ.

Fourth—String quartet in ensemble with piano, voice, or any ensemble of these instruments.

Fifth—A cappella Chorus.

The Westminster Choir School has secured for this festival the following artists: The Gordon String Quartet; Harry Cumpson, piano; Carl Weinrich, organ; Westminster Choir, Chorus.

The outstanding work of each selected program will be recorded and broadcast over a nation-wide hook-up and used in concert repertory by the artists who performed them.

The judges will be Paul Boepple, Aaron Copland, Carl Engel, Roy Harris, Edgar Varese, composers, in consultation with Jacques Gordon for string works, Harry Cumpson for piano works, Carl Weinrich for organ works, and John Finley Williamson for choral works.

Each work must be sent before February 1st, 1936, to Roy Harris, Westminster Choir School, Princeton, N. J., and with it a sealed envelope containing the name and address of the composer, along with return postage. Westminster Choir School will take all possible precautions to preserve and return all manuscripts, but will not assume responsibility for any lost manuscripts.

Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in this Issue: PAUL GIRARD, WILLIAM KOZLENKO, PHILIP MILLER,
HORACE VAN NORMAN, PETER HUGH REED

ORCHESTRAL

BEETHOVEN: *Fidelio*—Overture, played by the B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra, direction of Bruno Walter. Victor disc No. 11809, price \$1.50.

THIS overture was the fourth written by Beethoven for his only opera. The occasion was a revival in Vienna, in 1814, though it was not used at that performance. It has come to be accepted, however, and is usually played today when the opera is given. Bodanzky used to interpolate the *Third Leonore* between the acts at the Metropolitan, but it was the *Fidelio* Overture that opened the performance. It contains no themes taken from the opera.

Krehbiel called *Fidelio* Beethoven's child of sorrow. First there was the matter of the title. Beethoven wanted to call the work *Leonore*, but his opera was the third on the same subject, and it was considered advisable to call it *Fidelio*. The first performance was a failure. After a thorough revision the opera was given with some success, but Beethoven quarreled with the impressario, and withdrew his work. After seven years and another revision it was given again, this time with great acclaim. That was in 1814. Today it is admired by musicians and scholars, but the public generally has not come to accept Beethoven as an opera composer. This in spite of one of the grandest of dramatic arias, and one of the tensest moments in all opera. Perhaps the idea of a heroic soprano passing in disguise as a youth has been too much for the public to swallow.

But if the opera goes back to its rest after revival, not so the overtures. The popularity of *Leonore No. 3* is hardly

rivalled by its companions, but they are all occasionally brought out. As a prelude to the opera there is a great deal to be said for this fourth one in *E Major*. It does not tell the story of the faithful wife as does *No. 3*. It is bright and melodious, expressive, perhaps, of the happy days before the imprisonment of Florestan, or of the final triumph of conjugal love. The orchestration is masterly, containing interesting passages in the brass and woodwind. The splendid British orchestra gives a stirring and plastic performance under Walter's guidance, and the reproduction is thrillingly clear.

—P. M.

* * * *

COATES: *The Merry-makers* (a miniature overture), and *From Meadow to Mayfair*—*No. 3, Evening in Town*—Waltz. Played by the London Symphony Orchestra, direction of Eric Coates. Victor disc, No. 36170, price \$1.25.

ERIC COATES, composer of a number of popular ballads (including *Bird Songs at Eventide*) was born in Nottinghamshire, England, in 1866. A pupil of Tertis at the Royal Academy of Music, he first became known as a violist, specializing in chamber music. In 1911 he joined the Queen's Hall Orchestra, and a year later became first viola of that organization. He since has built up a goodly following with his songs and light orchestral pieces, which have been heard frequently at the Proms. While a distinctly light composer, he is not lacking in technique. Colles has written of his graceful handling of slight material — which might be taken as a description of this disc. The waltz leads one to suspect real gifts for light opera composition, and the modestly-titled overture is gay and very English. The recording is above criticism.

—P. M.

DVORAK: *Songs My Mother Taught Me*; and PONCE: *Estrellita*; played by Frank Black and his String Ensemble. Columbia disc No. 240M, 10-inch, price 75 cents.

THE nostalgic, melancholic quality of Dvorak's *Songs My Mother Taught Me* should prove more universally expressive in an arrangement like this, for the individuality of the singer generally precludes this. Frank Black has made an expressive arrangement of this song, and his straightforward, unsentimentalized performance sustains the universal note. The vocal line in the first verse is appropriately given to the cellos and in the second to the violins.

The companion selection on this disc, to our way of thinking, is poorly chosen. For, Ponce's *Estrellita* has none of the universal qualities of Dvorak's song, either as a vocal number or as an arrangement. Although, this is not the sort of music we want from Frank Black, since he is capable of bigger and better things, as his String Symphony programs on the air have proven, still we welcome the advent of him and his String Orchestra on records. Incidentally, this is not the full String Symphony we hear on the air, but only approximately half of it. The recording here is good.

—P. G.

* * * *

HOLST: *Mars, The Bringer of War*, from the orchestral suite *The Planets*; played by the London Symphony Orchestra, direction Albert Coates. Victor disc No. 11808, price \$1.50.

ALTHOUGH this recording was made several years ago, it is nevertheless a vital one today. This is largely due to the dynamic personality and superb energy of the conductor — Albert Coates, which inevitably manifests itself even if unvisualized. Coates has been strangely missing from record lists in the past year. The fact that he was one of the most arduous and energetic workers for recording in the early electrical days makes his absence conspicuous and incomprehensible. At this time, when recording has become so much more realistic and faith-

ful to the interpreter's art, Coates surely should be called upon, among the first, to re-make some of his earliest releases, which never truly represented his artistry because of the shortcomings in recording at the time they were made.

Holst's untimely death, two years ago, removed from the British scene, one of its most outstanding modern composers and one of its most lovable and truly revered pedagogues. Holst had a decided leaning toward mysticism; hence, his orchestral suite *The Planets* is based on the astrological significance of the Planets.

Mars is the *Bringer of War*. This is the first part of Holst's suite. Much has been written about this movement and its connotation. We believe that Holst sought to portray the approach of war, rather than the actual conflict; and for this reason, built this movement upward with an aggressive, rhythmical insistence — an accumulated energy. This is not war in actuality, but rather the projection of its vehemence in approach. As a picture of war, this music could never be considered significant, for "war is a state of the soul," as George Dyson has noted, "and only in some form of psychic translation can it come into music at all. It is not to be represented by vicarious marching. It is drill which is rhythmic, not fighting." As an *etude*, however, founded upon the approach of war, the insistence and overwhelming force of this music is both striking and effective.

Albert Coates interprets this music with appropriate vigor and strength, and makes it quite a thrilling experience.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

RIMSKY - KORSAKOW: *Scheherazade, Symphonic Suite, Opus 35*; played by the Philadelphia Orchestra, direction Leopold Stokowski. Victor Set M269, six discs, price \$12.00.

ALTHOUGH Rimsky-Korsakow under advisement implied a program by titles to each of the four movements of his *Scheherazade*, this program was however purposely left an indefinite one. Each section of the work is a mood, a general picture, based on an episode taken from the Arabian Nights.

Score Reading for Everyone

The NINE SYMPHONIES OF BEETHOVEN

Orchestral scores are no longer used merely for actual conducting or for analytical purposes. Musicians and music lovers are becoming more and more accustomed to using them at lectures, in the classroom, on the radio, in casts and phonograph recordings. The simplified system of score-reading presented in this book, based on the principles of previous study of instrumentation or orchestra score analysis, and requiring only the

ability to read vocal music, will enable thousands to enjoy an orchestral composition as it unfolds. The "Symphonies of Beethoven in Score" presented in this book, but in an entirely new way. Four pages of music are printed within one large page, measuring only 10 inches by 14 inches. The arrows (see Patent) are visible at one time, lessening turning of the page by more than 80%. The arrow system (see Patent) is so simple that it can be grasped by anyone. It is preceded by an exhaustive but concise

READ THIS EXPLANATION

The specimen page, naturally greatly reduced in size, shows the slow movement in the second of Beethoven's symphonies. The principal melodic line is placed at the top of the score over the flute part. The Exposition, Development, Recapitulation, Coda, and the entire movement. You will also note that at the bottom of the score underneath the principal melodic line lies in the violin for eight measures, then moves back to the 1st Violin staff, indicating that the principal melodic line is in the violin for eight measures, then moves back to the 1st Violin staff. This brief explanation, carefully followed, will make it clear that, merely by observing the arrows, one can readily follow the entire score.

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Violoncelli u. Kontrabässe

PRINCIPAL THEME—PART I

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of BEETHOVEN in SCORE

cal purposes in the study of musical theory; in at concerts or when listening to radio broadcasted in this volume, dispensing with the necessity of the ability to read ordinary instrumental or to experience a new pleasure — of following unfolds itself on the printed page. "The Nine presents the entire series in miniature form — pages of score, each measuring 4" x 5½" are measuring 9" x 12"; thus eight pages of scoring and the consequent chances of losing one's arrow-signal system of score-reading (in course be grasped almost at a glance. Each symphony concise historical and critical note.

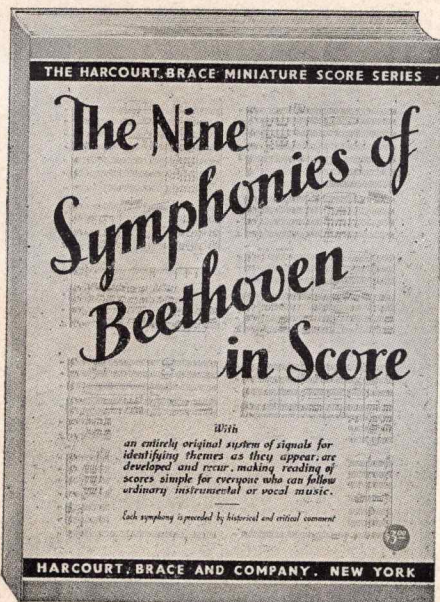
ANATION OF THE SYSTEM

ced in size, printed on the left is the first page of the a's symphonies. You will note the word "Exposition" is flute staff; all form divisions such as *Introduction*, *Coda*, etc., are printed in their proper places all through that the words "Principal Theme—Part I" are printed e 'cello and double-bass staff. This indicates that the or eight measures; then the arrow shifts to the clarinet c line has moved to the clarinet where it remains for Violin staff in the last measure shown on the specimen followed in connection with the specimen page, will the arrow in its flight from staff to staff, anyone can

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Rimsky-Korsakow was most anxious in the beginning that *Scheherazade* should be accepted primarily as purely symphonic music, and that the atmosphere invoked by it should only suggest the programmatic material. Prior to publication, he suggested labelling the movements, prelude, ballade, adagio and finale, but was persuaded by his publisher not to do this.

In his autobiography, *My Musical Life*, Rimsky-Korsakow tells us that the unifying thread (or motif) found in the brief introduction to movements one, two and four, and in the intermezzo in movement three, written for solo violin, delineates "Scheherazade herself telling her wondrous tales to the stern Sultan. The final conclusion to movement four serves the same purpose. In vain do people seek in my suite leading motives linked unbrokenly with ever the same poetic ideas and conceptions. On the contrary, in the majority of cases, all these seeming leitmotives are nothing but purely musical material for symphonic development. These given motives thread and spread over all the movements of the suite, alternating and intertwining each with the other. Appearing as they do each time under different illumination, depicting each time different traits and expressing different moods, the self-same given motives and themes correspond each time to different images, actions and pictures In this manner, developing quite freely the musical data taken as a basis of the composition, I had in view the creation of an orchestral suite in four movements, closely knit by the community of its themes and motives, yet presenting, as it were, a kaleidoscope of fairy-tale images and designs of oriental character"

Thus, it will be noted, *Scheherazade* was intended to be enjoyed as a symphonic suite, and may well be, apart from any program other than the source of its inspiration.

This suite is undeniably music of the Orient—its rhythms and its color are full of the glamour, the intoxicating allurements of the East about which poets have written glowingly in all times. "This music has the perfume of distant lands," Olin Downes, the music critic of the *New York Times*, has said, "possibly more perfumed

to our imagination than if we knew them too well, but serving marvellously as a well-spring of poetry and dreams of the heart's desires."

Stokowski's performance of *Scheherazade* realizes all the glamour of the score. He feels and conveys its sumptuous qualities, its sensuous melodic lines, its exotic rhythms with rare musicianship. In fact, it is this side of the music that he interprets rather than any drama which was written into it by others than the composer; hence his interpretation might be said to be consistent with the composer's wishes. The recording is of course magnificent: every detail of the score is revealed in a splendid and realistic manner. The system of fading-in and fading-out is utilized in this recording. It is our only point of contention with an otherwise superb set.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

SCHUBERT: *Rosamunde* — Overture, Op. 26 (*Alphonso und Estrella*), played by Halle Orchestra, direction Sir Hamilton Harty. Columbia disc, No. 68322-D, price \$1.50

THERE are two overtures to *Rosamunde* by Schubert. This is the original, true and lesser-known one. Though the more famous *Zauberharfe* Overture was used in the first performance of Wilhelmine von Chezy's play, along with Schubert's incidental music, it was the present work which Schubert had intended for *Rosamunde*. In the great Breitkopf and Haertel edition of Schubert's works it is to be found with the score of *Rosamunde*, and not with *Alphonso und Estrella*, with which opera it became associated. Therefore, if we are puzzled by the labeling of this overture as Op. 26 (*Rosamunde*) instead of Op. 69 (*Alphonso und Estrella*), it is due to the early and apparently permanent substitution of the overture to *Die Zauberharfe*.

Schubert was never successful as a stage composer. Though essentially a lyricist, he did not, certainly, lack the dramatic spark — as witness his *Erlkoenig* or *Doppelgaenger*. There must be a great deal

of first-rate music tucked away in his forgotten operas, but with his well-known lack of discrimination, he was not happy in his choice of *libretti*. Beautiful as was his *Rosamunde* music, it could not carry the mediocre play, and after only two performances the manuscript was lost, to be discovered forty-four years later by Sir George Grove and Sir Arthur Sullivan. As for *Alphonso und Estrella*, it was never heard at all until 26 years after Schubert's death, when Liszt gave one performance of it in Weimar. It is interesting to note that the overture used on this occasion was not one of Schubert's, but a work from the pen of Rubinstein. *Alphonso* did, however, have his day of success when, in 1881, a revised and abridged version was performed at Karlsruhe under the direction of Johann Fuchs. One wonders what sort of reception would be given one of Schubert's operas today.

The present overture was well worth reviving. That it is full of melody goes without saying. The Sigmund Spaeths will be amused by a foreshadowing of *Meistersinger*, but the resemblance will not bother anyone. It is good, honest and at the same time sparkling music. Sir Hamilton Harty and the Halle Orchestra give us plenty of honesty, but one might wish for a little more of the sparkle. Though probably several years old the recording is good. Concert and radio conductors might make a note of this work.

—P. M.

* * * *

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 7, in C Major*, played by the B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra, direction of Adrian Boult. Victor Set M268, six discs, price \$9.00.

SCHUBERT'S *Seventh Symphony* — sometimes called the tenth, and on occasion the ninth — was written in the last year of the composer's life, and given to the Vienna *Musikverein* for performance, but the idea was abandoned owing to the length and difficulty of the work. Schubert at last found his ease in writing for the orchestra, and in his enthusiasm declared that he would compose no more songs, but confine himself to opera and symphony. He died without ever hearing the *C Major* performed, although it was

given at a concert of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde* in Vienna about a month after his death. After a second performance in March, 1829, the symphony was forgotten, to be discovered ten years later by Schumann, who sent it on to Mendelssohn for performance in Leipzig. It was repeated three times in that season. When, however, in 1844, Mendelssohn took the work to England to be played by the London Philharmonic, the players were overcome with merriment at the repeated triplets in the fast movement, and the performance was not given. The first American hearing took place in New York at a concert of the Philharmonic Society under the direction of Theodor Eisfeld. "Probably by that time," says Lawrence Gilman, "the triplets had ceased to be funny and had become sublime."

Today, "the *Symphony of the Heavenly Length*" is acknowledged as Schubert's finest larger work. Certainly its length is not its only heavenly aspect, for here the melodic genius of Schubert is at its height. One is tempted to resume the old and futile speculation about what Schubert might have produced had he lived longer. Like the *Schwanengesang*, the *Symphony* shows a mastery he had not always possessed. His well-known admiration for Beethoven accounts for a certain approximation of the breadth and sweep of the older Master's style, but the melodies are Schubert's own, and to their beauty we owe it that for all its long duration, the *Symphony* leaves us wanting more.

To describe in detail all the beauties of such a work would be not only tiresome but unnecessary. It is a lasting refutation of the charge that Schubert could not write successfully in the larger forms. The bold grandeur of the first movement, with its passages for horns and trombones; the soft gentleness of the second, with the typical minor-to-major changes and its ravishing interplay of oboe and cello; the lusty rhythm of the *Scherzo* and its profoundly moving trio; and by no means least the magnificent *Finale* — we would not lose a minute of it. Of the final coda Apthorp has written: "An enormous effect is produced by often-recurring repetitions of the first four notes of this theme by all the strings, horns and trumpets in oc-

taves. These frequent groups of four c's given out fortissimo remind one forcibly of the heavy steps of the Statue in the second finale of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*." The ending has also been likened to the celebrated finales of the Beethoven *Ninth* and the Brahms' *First* — surely it is worthy to stand in their company.

The B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra seems to be the leader in the great re-recording movement which is so general today. Whether under the direction of Boult, Busch or Walter, the performances of this band never seem to fail to replace earlier versions. There are two other recordings of this great symphony, but at the time of their issue such clarity, tonal quality, balance and resonant depth as are displayed in this new set were scarcely even dreamed of. If, on the whole, a more imaginative reading is conceivable, if more could be made of the dynamic contrasts and if a greater rhythmic freedom is possible, there are too many fine things in Boult's reading to justify a quarrel. There is fine vigor in the *Scherzo*, and brilliance in the *Finale*, and given such reproduction, we can only shout our gratitude. Perhaps we may be permitted to complain, however, that there is only one repeat observed in the entire set — the opening section of the *Scherzo*. We would like to hear the trio again!

—P. M.

* * * *

YOUMANS: *Carioca*, and CONRAD: *The Continental*, played by The Boston "Pops" Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, Conductor. Victor disc, No. 4287, price \$1.

THIS fine record may well establish a new trend in recorded music which will be of the utmost significance. The practice of including arrangements of meritorious popular dance selections on symphonic "pop" programs, while not a complete innovation (the St. Louis Orchestra, under Ganz, was experimenting with the idea as long as twelve years ago), has never really caught hold until quite recently and it is very fitting that the Boston "Pops" Orchestra, some eighty pieces strong, should be the first to bring this type of truly symphonic jazz to records.

The results here are notable. The gorgeous string and woodwind tone of this

magnificent orchestra fairly glorifies these two familiar numbers (both of genuine musical distinction, by the way), and the disc as a whole should serve very effectively to bridge the gap which now exists, to a large extent, between lovers of symphonic music on the one hand and lovers of popular dance music on the other.

As a sign of the times, it is somewhat interesting to note that Arthur Fiedler conductor of the "Pops" programs (as well as concert-master of the Boston Orchestra during their regular season), is the son of the noted ex-conductor of the Boston Orchestra, Max Fiedler, while still another son of a famous conductor, Mitja Nikisch, is leading a dance orchestra in Germany. Innumerable instances of a similar nature could be cited, but this will suffice in our rather roundabout effort to demonstrate the particularly close relationship between so-called "popular" music and so-called "serious" music today. A record such as this is vivid exemplification of this bond and, as such, should meet with an exceedingly warm response.

—H. V. N.

* * * *

CHAMBER MUSIC

BACH: *The Musical Offering* — Trio, played by the Italian Trio (Alberto Poltronieri, violin; Arturo Bonucci, cello; Alfred Casella, piano). Two Victor discs, 8710-11, price \$4.00.

THIS "arrangement" of the *Trio* (*Sonata*) from *The Musical Offering* is to us musically unsatisfactory. We see no reason in the world for changing the original instrumentation of this work just to make it available for Casella's particular ensemble.

Bach scored this work for flute, violin and continuo. Mr. Casella, in eliminating the flute, considerably alters the instrumentation. Now, we have no criticism to make against those who like to transcribe: that is their business. And if the transcription turns out to be a good one, it is our good fortune. If, on the other hand, a man destroys the original character of the music, that, we feel, does become our business: either to criticise or lament.

To us, it is evident that, as soon as one gets into the music, the absence of the flute makes itself felt. For, in the present arrangement, the music seems heavy, even drugged, and decidedly monotonous. Although well executed, technically — for, all three men are, in their respective fields, excellent artists — there is a hardness in the playing which is difficult to condone.

All this may strike the reader — as well as the listener — as caustic observation. The present writer feels, however, that no apologies are necessary for this particular evaluation.

The history of the *Musical Offering* is, we venture to say, familiar almost to all. It will be recalled that it was written after a visit Bach made to Frederick the Great in 1747. The King gave Bach an original theme on which to extemporize a *fugue* in six parts. A most difficult feat even for the extraordinary Sebastian! Bach declined this subject, and is said to have supplied a theme of his own. He went through the extemporization and astounded the monarch by his phenomenal con-

trapuntal genius. When Bach returned from Potsdam, he set about carefully writing this, *The Musical Offering*, using the King's theme as the nucleus. He not only wrote a six-part fugue, but added new material: a fugue in three parts, a considerable facility which he (Bach) had at *regium*, including a *canon perpetuus* for two parts by inversion with free bass, and a *fuga canonica*, which, as Parry says, "are mainly examples of the almost incredible facility which he (Bach) had attained in technical feats of this kind."

To all this, he inserted in the *Musical Offering* — presumably as a compliment, since Frederick the Great was an excellent flutist — the *Sonata* or *Trio* (for flute, violin and continuo) which is, Parry continues, "more essentially musical than either the fugues or the *ricercars*." (We would, however, except the beautiful *Ricercare* in six parts). Bach did not attempt, however, to put "an extemporized work on record, but composed the sonata specially, on subjects derived (with copious variations) from the subject given him by the King."

Columbia Masterworks

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BACH	— Violin Concerto No. 1 in A Minor, Huberman and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra	Set 210
HAYDN	— "Farewell" Symphony, Wood and London Sym. Orch.	Set 205
MOZART	— Divertimento No. 17 (K334), Harty & London Phil. Orch.	Set 207
BEETHOVEN	— "Harp" Quartet, Opus 74, Lener String Quartet	Set 202
BEETHOVEN	— "Serenade" Trio, Opus 8, Hindemith Trio	Set 217
BEETHOVEN	— "Pastoral" Symphony, Paray & Colonne Sym. Orch.	Set 201
d'INDY	— Symphony on a French Mountain Air, Paray, Long and Colonne Symphony Orchestra	Set 211
STRAVINSKY	— Les Noces, Soloists, Chorus and Percussion Orch., direction Composer	Set 204
TANSMAN	— Triptyque, Golschmann & St. Louis Sym. Orch.	Set 213



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The *Trio* is written with the model of the Italian violin sonata in mind. It consists of an introductory slow movement, an *allegro*, a middle slow movement, and a scintillating final *allegro*. It is conceded that when Bach wrote for a particular instrument — violin, organ, cello, flute, harpsichord, etc., — that instrument contained the apotheosis of expression, peculiar only to itself. When writing, for example, for the flute, he naturally wrote a *special* kind of music, suited essentially to that instrument. And this sonata, as his other chamber music, is woven into compact design, in which each instrument exchanges its characteristics of resonance, its tone-qualities, with one another. It is, in fine, a constant interlacing of *timbre*, dynamics, and sonority. It is therefore logical to assume that by substituting one instrument for another — particularly when there is no tonal relationship between them — the pattern of the work, as originally conceived, is unconditionally disrupted.

The violin can never, we believe, take the place of the velvety, dulcet tone of the flute. The *timbre* of this instrument helps balance the other two instruments (violin, piano or harpsichord): it helps shade in the background, it gives the work depth as well as perspective. In the present arrangement, these qualities, in our estimation, are lost.

It would, however, be unfair to end this review on a note of calamity. If the listener will try to pass over the instrumentation of Mr. Casella's arrangement, and concentrate solely on the beauty of the music, he will, I feel, be amply compensated.

—W. K.

* * * *

BEETHOVEN: *Quartet No. 12 in E Flat* (*Opus 127*), played by the Flonzaley Quartet, five 12-inch Victor discs, Album No. 153, price \$10.00.

IT would be a mistake to judge the once active, though still prominent Flonzaley Quartet, on the merits of the present recording, which was made a number of years ago before this organization's disbandment. The interpretation of this work as a whole inspires no enthusiastic praise. It is expedient to admit at the outset that the faults of their current reading involve

more than the matter of temperamental differences; that is, differences between their interpretation and the interpretation of another first-class ensemble presenting the same work. The question, and its corollary argument, here, is not a problem involving the abuse of temperamental license.

There are definite fundamental values which never change in a work of music: these values are essentially in the composition itself, and are above the superimposed values of the performers. We are always interested, of course, in learning *how* a certain ensemble will play a piece of music: the subtle differences of temperament, intellectual understanding, and perception, are what comprise these personal qualities of interpretation. These are acknowledged rights of the executant, and we, as listeners, are concerned with the values that make his reading, his presentation, different from others.

But, when the technical (not the emotional) performance is somewhat erratic, awry, it is that that will then provoke criticism. Unfortunately, it is this technical capriciousness of the Flonzaley Quartet which distinguishes the presentation of this beautiful work.

It cannot be denied that the deafness of Beethoven at the time he composed *Opus 127* — it dates from 1824 — had much to do with its dynamic inconsistencies, its clashing tonalities, its many unbalanced expression marks. Since he was almost completely deaf when he wrote this work, it would naturally reflect many of his temperamental vicissitudes. All of this, however, is relatively unimportant. It has nothing, or very little, to do with the *technical presentation* of the work. Moreover, it is the amalgam of these unusual values, these manifest dynamic and formal inconsistencies that make, in part, the last Quartets (of which *Opus 127* is the first of the five great quartets) of Beethoven such superlative masterpieces.

This recording, incidentally, has been listed in the Victor catalogue for about two or three years, and only just released.

The odd side of this set is devoted to the *Scherzo* from *Opus 18*, No. 6 by Beethoven.

—W. K.

MOZART: *Quartet in C Major* (K. 465) (7 sides), and *Quartet in G Minor* (K. R.J): *Menuetto and Rondo*; played by The Gordon String Quartet. Columbia set No. 219, 4 discs, price \$6.

THIS is the most discussed string quartet ever written. The reason for this lies in the famous false relations in the opening *Adagio*. Naturally the first few bars were too much for Mozart's contemporaries. Even Haydn, to whom this quartet and its five companions were dedicated, could only remark that if Mozart wrote such things he must have a good reason. The publisher, Artaria, returned the quartets as so full of mistakes as to be unplayable. For many years after Mozart's death musicians continued to puzzle over those false relations. Fetis went so far as to correct them, defending his action as follows: "I was attacked concerning a correction proposed by me for a passage in the introduction of Mozart's *Quartet in C*. It is admitted that this passage, painful to the ears, has always been a subject of astonishment to those who understand. My correction was highly approved by Cherubini, Reicha, Boieldieu and other famous musicians; it has the advantage of simplicity and regularity, and leaves untouched the conception of the illustrious composer . . . The harshnesses arise from the lack of regularity in the imitations, and I showed that by placing the entry of the first violin a beat later, Mozart would have produced sound harmony without injuring his conception." We of today are used to far more violent chromaticism than this — we are only amazed that Mozart, in his generation, should have conceived such things — but, as W. J. Henderson has remarked, there is no explaining Mozart.

It seems hardly possible that anyone at any time could have found an adverse word for the second movement. Dunhill calls it "possibly the most emotionally satisfying slow movement from any of Mozart's quartets." Certainly this *Andante* alone would place the work among the greatest compositions of its kind. The

Minuet is full of delightful contrasts, and the *Finale* is pure Mozartian sprightliness.

It is a pleasure to welcome the Gordon Quartet to the ranks of recording artists. Under the leadership of Jacques Gordon, one-time pupil of Franz Kneisel and former concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, this organization has won a place for itself among American chamber music groups. Major works from the American studios are always an encouraging sign, especially when they engage the services of well-known artists previously unrecorded. Unfortunately, however, this cannot be called a completely successful debut. The quartet plays as though somewhat over-awed by all the controversy. Mr. Gordon's first entry (the very pass-



THE GORDON STRING QUARTET
An American Organization

age which caused the excitement) is timid to the point of inaudibility, and never throughout the work do the four players give that impression of abandon which is so delightful in Mozart; which may be due more than in part to recording set-up. For, in the little *Minuet* and *Rondo* which fill the odd side of the set (coupled, incidentally, with the *Minuet* of the *C Major Quartet*, to keep the *Finale* on the two sides of the last disc), the Gordons seem more at their ease. These two move-

ments from Mozart's first string quartet are especially interesting as a study in the composer's development. Though the first three movements of K. 80 were written in 1770, the *Rondo* was added some time later.

This set is, strangely enough, the first of this work to be released by a domestic company. Nearly two years ago the Budapest Quartet gave their interpretation to H. M. V., eclipsing the two earlier recordings of this work. It has been a matter for some wonder that Victor has never seen fit to repress this. Perhaps the fact that the work was slightly abridged to fit it to three discs may be the cause for this. Music lovers today are generally adverse to excisions of any kind, no matter how adroitly handled.

—P. M.

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MOZART: *Quintet in C Major*, K. 515; played by Pro Arte Quartet with Alfred Hobday, second violist. Victor Set, M270, four discs, price \$8.00.

MOZART'S *C Major Quintet* is less passionate than his famous *G Minor*, but its poetic profundity and beauty are almost equally as great; for, as a fact, when one listens to it so supreme does its musical message seem that one is unable to think of the other work. (The importance and the implication of these quintets are discussed in an article in this issue, to which we respectfully call our readers' attention.)

The *C Major Quintet* was completed in April 19, 1787, not May 19, as is often erroneously set forth (this mistake undoubtedly emanates from Cobbett, who gives the latter date) and the *G Minor* was completed on May 16, same year.

The depth of Mozart's inspiration is sounded in the opening of this work by the forceful upward stride of the cello over the murmuring accompaniment of second violin and violas. The first violin answers the cello with a tender, yearning motif. Later, this leads into a reverie which expands itself leisurely, which in turn, leads into a short dramatic conflict. The recapitulation, (side three), emerges from this drama, asserting anew the depth of

the composer's emotion. The sombre minuet, which follows, is symphonic in proportion. This is no dance, but a musical utterance from a troubled soul. The *Trio* is born of that inner yearning which is largely the subject of our article. If tears are truly manifested in music, then assuredly they are in evidence here. The *Andante* is melodic beauty at its height. It veritably defies description, or, perhaps we should say, description is superfluous. For, this music was created to be heard not described. The manner in which Mozart utilizes the violin and the viola in a rhapsodic duet deserves to be commented upon. Whatever melancholic note has been sounded is removed with the finale, for here the composer sings with a light heart; but his gaiety here does not sound the incongruous note that it does in the final movement of the *G Minor Quintet*. That is why we would term this work a more uniform one.

The performance and recording of this work are superlative.

—P. H. R.

PIANO

AARON COPLAND: *Piano Variations*; played by the Composer, (three parts); and *Nocturne for Violin and Piano*; played by Jacques Gordon (violin) and the Composer (piano). Columbia Set No. 220, price \$3.00.

THE harmonic and rhythmic idiosyncrasies of Mr. Copland's music, as manifest in these *Piano Variations*, are significantly personal. We say personal because Mr. Copland was once an enthusiastic admirer of Stravinsky and of jazz. Since then, however, he has grown away from both, and, now, his music reveals a style and manner of expression peculiarly his own.

These *Piano Variations* were composed in 1930, and since Mr. Copland is a slow and painstaking writer, they should be considered as an example of his comparatively recent work. The composition as a whole is treated in a vigorous and incisive manner, with no harmonic osten-

tation or rhythmic eccentricities. The form of the work is substantially cohesive: the music states its case, goes quietly about its business of development, and finishes as it began; without fanfare or excitement.

If the listener seeks melodic beauty in the traditional sense of the word, he will be amply disappointed. For, Mr. Copland is, I presume, impatient with the emotional prodigality inherent in such variations as those written by Brahms or Schumann. Where a composer would jump at the opportunity of "putting everything he has" in the variation form, Mr. Copland, with disarming modesty, restricts himself, and goes about developing his thematic material unpretentiously.

The thematic pattern, which consists roughly of a skip of the interval of a major third, is taken up in each variation — there are twenty and a coda — and through a series of rhythmic and harmonic contrasts, culminates in a work of small but powerful proportions. The dissonance, never ostentatious, is crisp and incisive.

Mr. Copland, as a pianist, reveals remarkable technical fluency; he interprets the work with a gusto consistent with its quality of strength and sharpness. His sense of dynamics, however, is limited.

The *Nocturne*, from *Two Pieces for Violin and Piano*, is, as music, less abstract, and therefore approaches closer to some pictorial suggestion. Moreover, Mr. Copland manifests a deeper feeling for melody in this work, and, though built on a dissonant melodic pattern, there is, however, a mood of tranquility and serenity.

Mr. Jacques Gordon plays the violin part with quiet nobility and finesse.

—W. K.

* * * *

SCHUMANN: *Arabeske, Op. 18*, played by Vladimir Horowitz. Ten-inch Victor disc, No. 1713, price \$1.50.

HERE is a piece of good old-fashioned romanticism. Schumann is said not to have regarded this *Arabeske* as very important, and perhaps it is just its lack of weight which helps it to carry its years.

New Victor Records for the Discriminating Music Lover

- **Scheherazade* (Rimsky-Korsakow).....Stokowski — Philadelphia Orchestra
- **Symphony No. 7 in C Major* (Schubert).....Boult — British Broadcasting Company Symphony Orchestra
- Quartet No. 12 in E Flat*.....Flonzaley Quartet
(Beethoven, Opus 127)
- Fidelio Overture* (Beethoven).....Bruno Walter—British Broadcasting Company Symphony Orchestra
- Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*.....Choir of the Temple Church,
(Bach: arr. Allen) London
- Arabeske* (Schumann, Opus 18).....Vladimir Horowitz

*New recordings of previous releases.



VICTOR RECORDS

RCA Manufacturing Company, Inc.
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

It is wistful, dreamy music, recalling an era far removed from our own, and we can sigh as we hear it to think how times have changed. It belongs to a period that knew not Wagner, Verdi or Tschaikowski — though through its trceries we can sense the approach of Brahms. Scharwenka speaks of the “clear form, effective in happy contrasts and brilliant finger-work.” Needless to say Horowitz plays it superbly. Always one of the most brilliant pianists of his day, he has lately shown unsuspected warmth in his playing. His style is ideal for Schumann, as it is characterized by splendid balance — fervor without sentimentality. It is such playing that can make this music live again. Mechanically, too, the record is a good one.

—P. M.

VOCAL

BACH: *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* (arr. Sir Hugh Allen), and SPOHR: *The Last Judgment—Lord God of Heaven and Earth*, sung by the Choir of the Temple Church, London, G. Thalben-Ball, organist and conductor. Oboe obbligato in the Bach played by Leon Goossens. Ten-inch Victor disc, No. 4286, price \$1.00.

THIS famous chorale is taken from Bach's sacred Cantata No. 147, “*Herz und Mund und That und Leben*,” written for the fourth Sunday in Advent. The melody, of course, is not by Bach, but his treatment of it has become so famous that it is often attributed to him. Though a number of recordings of it have been made, in various arrangements, there is not, as far as we know, any either in the original language, or using the Bach orchestration. The closest is the one in the Columbia History, sung with oboe, strings and organ. In the original, however, there is also a trumpet, and the first violin doubles with the oboe. In the present version, arranged by Sir Hugh Allen, we have only the oboe and a piano. The tempo is faster than it is usually taken, and the listener may need several hearings to get used to this. But the performance is good and straightforward, making only one “ef-

fect” — at the word “dying” in the last phrase. The oboe obbligato played, as in the Columbia History recording, by Leon Goossens (brother of Eugene) is outstanding for beautiful tone and musicianly phrasing.

For the Spohr selection we should be duly grateful, as this once celebrated composer is all but absent from the catalogs. Outside the choir loft he is known today only as a writer of occasionally-played violin music. In his time his operas were tremendously successful — his *Faust* held the stage for many years before Gounod — and his symphonies and oratorios are very important historically. *The Last Judgment* (*Die letzten Dinge*) was first performed at Cassel on Good Friday, March 25, 1826. Introduced in England at the Norwich festival in 1830, it became one of the favorite oratorios. *Lord God of Heaven and Earth* comes at the end of the first part. It is written for quartet and chorus with orchestra, but it is given here with organ accompaniment, as it is in church. Students of the romantic period will be struck by the strong influence Spohr had upon Mendelssohn. And like Mendelssohn's music, that of Spohr is satisfying without being very exciting. The Temple Church Choir, it will be remembered, is a boy-choir (it was they who made the historic Victor disc of Mendelssohn's *Hear My Prayer*). Those who do not like the quality of the boy-voice will not want this record, but for others there will be a fascination in the freshness of the voices. The recording is excellent.

—P. M.

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LEHAR: *Liebste Glaub'an Mich*, and *Schoen ist die Welt*, from *Schoen ist die Welt*; sung by Richard Tauber. Columbia disc No. 4108M, 10-inch, price \$1.

ROMBERG: *Auf Wiedersehen*, from *The Blue Paradise*, and BINGHAM: *Love's Old Sweet Song*; sung by Nelson Eddy. Victor disc 4284, 10-inch, price \$1.00.

LEHAR is said to have written *Schoen ist die Welt* for Tauber. This operetta, with Tauber in the lead, had a long run on

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THE MISSA SOLEMNIS

(Continued from Page 135)

makes the music of *Credo in unum Deum* return, after the *Resurrexit*, to the words *Credo in Spiritum Sanctum*, thus emphasizing, after all the intricate articles of creed, the identity of the Son and the Holy Spirit with the Father. We have returned from the passionate to the sublime — which makes its culmination in the great fugue — *Et Vitam Venturi*. (Note in the latter part of the fugue, a fascinating suggestion of cross rhythm; the voices which are singing the old theme in diminution suggest, by association with its previous form, a six-four time with its first beat on the second actual quarter note of the measure — while everybody else is hammering out the real three-two rhythm.)

It follows from all I have said that the *Missa* badly needs the aid of the phonograph. Two recordings exist, but neither is very good. There is the Victor set — sung by the Orfeo Catala of Barcelona and conducted by Lluís Millet, and the Brunswick-Polydor-Set performed by the Bruno Kittel Choir and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Bruno Kittel. With all its faults, I vote for the Victor; for they are mostly on the surface. Unlike the Brunswick-Polydor, it was not recorded in a studio but at an actual performance out of doors. It is full of noise from the assembled audience, also its breaks are not well chosen (some, as a matter of fact, are in the middle of a measure), once, in the *Agnus Dei*, there is even a cut, and lastly, its balance is far from perfect. But with all this, it gives you the music in a noble performance, full of religious fire. One feels that the singers enjoyed performing the work.

The Brunswick-Polydor set is smoother; it sounds much better until you know the music, and then it is disappointing. The places where the balance is poor offend here as they do not in the Victor set, because instead of being the fault of poor recording they are the fault of poor interpretation. And the places where the recording is at fault, although admittedly

fewer, are nevertheless worse than in the Victor (such as the total extinction of the flute in the *Et Incarnatus*). Another point, the violin in the *Benedictus* should sound as impersonal as an angel, not like an Elman getting ready to play the *Caprice Viennois*. It should descend from its high G at the beginning and disappear up there at the end without sentimental stress or tonal ostentation. The same goes for the soloists with their *juicy* portamentos. In the case of the uncanny "War" passage, this is nearly ruined, in my estimation, by a too rapid tempo.

In fairness, however, I must admit the Brunswick-Polydor recording is worth possessing. In places, it is much better than the Victor, notably the *Et Vitam*.

These two recordings have unquestionably done much to make the *Missa* familiar to a group of people who might never have heard the work otherwise. They have prompted many to recommend them to friends, for familiarity incites latent appreciation. With either of the two recordings, a score and one's imagination intact, one can do much toward developing an appreciation for a great neglected masterpiece.

THE GROWTH OF MOZART'S GENIUS

(Continued from Page 138)

preciation of their essentiality, although the influence of the thought of death may well be taken into consideration at this time, for it is a natural psychological transition of former frustrations.

Like the *G Minor*, the *C Major Quintet* is a profound and deeply moving work, the intrinsic worth of which, only falls short when compared to the other work. It is not illogical to believe had the *G Minor* never been written, the *C Major* would have attained similar approbation and popularity. For the *G Minor* is regarded as one of Mozart's greatest chamber works, and has been singled out for performance more often than any of the other quintets.

Mr. Grew believes that the *G Minor* is an extraordinary expression in sound of filial love and filial compassion. (We would include the *C Major* also, since it emanated from the same inspirational source). He feels that Mozart's love for his father predominates as the latter faces death, and that all resentment of his parent's unnatural domination of him as a child is lost in the strength of his great filial love.

Thus it would seem, as Mozart contemplates death in a dual manner, the old yearning reasserts itself, and he expresses himself in a deeper and more moving manner than ever before.

Grew has said of the *G Minor Quintet* that its chief subjects, besides its filial devotion, "are pain, regret, and a measure of that divine discontent which inspires men to supreme spiritual achievements." Mozart's contemplation of death, a purely subconscious one, is but the contemplation of another youth — an eternal one — where the freedom of the spirit would be inviolable. His early religious teachings and his later study of Freemasonry would establish this belief.

This, in our estimation, is however only the psychological transition of Mozart's earliest discontent with life — his unrealized aspiration for a spiritual freedom. If we accept Mr. Grew's viewpoint, regarding the implication of the *G Minor Quintet*, we contemplate one of life's strangest paradoxes. For, if this is true, then it was through Mozart's father than he first knew discontent and later through him that this condition — which the years and life's vicissitudes had augmented — was sublimated and strangely altered.

All of which is purely psychological speculation. As we have previously stated, to hypothesize regarding the development of a creative genius is to impose in part our own theories upon our readers. As we brought out earlier, however, such psychological reasoning truly necessitates the writing of a book to justify fully its further verity and value.

(A review on the recently issued recording of Mozart's *C Major Quintet*, made by the *Pro Arte String Quartet* and *Alfred Hobday*, will be found on page 149).

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the Continent. These are, of course, the principal solos, appropriately tuneful and sentimental, which Tauber sings in his own inimitable manner.

Eddy's latest recordings are the result of requests from his admirers all over the country. Needless to say, he sings both selections with feeling and warmth of tone. Although his is not a remarkable voice, his assurance, his fluency and his fine artistry make almost anything he sings enjoyable.

—P. G.

ERRATUM

Last month, for some strange unaccountable reason, we got our "Busches" mixed, and reviewed the performance of Mozart's *Linz Symphony* as being conducted by Adolf instead of Fritz Busch. This negates our assertion that Adolf displays a third side to his musical versatility, etc. As it happens that Fritz is somewhat of a musician himself, besides being a conductor, we may not be wrong about him not eclipsing himself as a conductor, even though the public knows him only in the latter capacity.

—The Editor.

(Continued from Page 132)

home a shrine to which all its members come with real joy and gratitude for the opportunities which it offers *Children* should be taught that participation in any avocation gives infinitely more permanent joy than merely watching others perform Have a radio, by all means, and a talking machine, but do not let the young people of the home get the monumentally inane idea that these marvelous and necessary instruments can supply that musical understanding and joy which can come only through actual music study."

In the Popular Vein

By VAN

VOCAL

AAA—*St. Louis Blues*, and *Trav'lin All Alone*, sung by The Boswell Sisters. Brunswick 7467.

James Johnson's deeply moving *Trav'lin All Alone*, first sung unforgettably by Ethel Waters six years ago on Columbia, is slowly but surely coming into a recognition that it richly deserves. Quite unique in that it is equally effective when sung as a popular blues number or as an art—or concert-song, it receives here, naturally enough, treatment which is considerably on the popular side, but which is not in the least lacking in dignity on that account. Their version of *St. Louis Blues* is grand and no small part of its effectiveness lies in the highly ingenious orchestral accompaniment furnished it here.

BALLROOM DANCE

AAAA—*Double Trouble*, and *Why Stars Come Out at Night*, both from *The Big Broadcast*. Ray Noble and his Orchestra. Victor 25105.

Two numbers from the new Paramount musical in which Noble and the band appear and the latter of which is Noble's own tune and undoubtedly destined for big-hitdom. It is a suave number which Noble saves from over-saccharinity by his usual tasteful treatment. *Double Trouble* is in snappier tempo and the superb ensemble playing which is now characterizing the work of the band is very much in evidence, with The Freshmen (elsewhere known as The Tune Twisters) proving themselves the best of the hot male threesomes. There is considerable funny business by them and, surprisingly enough, a few exclamations by Ray himself.

* * * *

AAAA—*Piccolino*, from *Top Hat*, and *Toddlin' Along With You*. Leo Reisman and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7488.

AAAA—*Top Hat*, and *Isn't This a Lovely Day?* both from *Top Hat*. Johnny Green and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7487.

AAA—*Cheek to Cheek*, and *No Strings*, both from *Top Hat*. Leo Reisman and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7486.

The tunes from the new Irving Berlin musical, *Top Hat*, are bound to more or less dominate the releases for the month. We are therefore listing all five of them in their Brunswick recordings, all with vocals by Fred Astaire, star of the firm. Astaire, of course, is an uncommonly ingratiating performer and is successful to a degree in projecting his delightful personality onto his recordings. *Top Hat* and *No Strings*

both contain some of his priceless tap steps, while he sings agreeably in all. Orchestrally, Green's contributions are the most appealing, although we fancy *Piccolino* will be the most successful number, since it appears to be in line for a popularity similar to those other Astaire vehicles, *Carioca* and *The Continental*.

* * * *

AAAA—*I'm In the Mood for Love*, and *I Feel a Song Comin' On*, both from *Every Night at Eight*. Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra. Victor 25091.

A brace of Fields-McHugh tunes possessing unusual merit, and Whiteman rouses himself out of his lethargy to do a really splendid job on the latter, particularly, which has vocalizing by Ramona and The King's Men. Possibly, if Whiteman were fed tunes of this type somewhat oftener, his work would not be so generally soporific.



PAUL WHITEMAN

AAA—*And Then Some*, and *China Sea*. Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra. Victor 25088.

Vee Lawnhurst's *And Then Some* has had a very rapid and quite surprising rise to No. 1 standing in nation-wide popularity at the time of writing and Whiteman's version of it is just about perfect, considering the type of tune it is. Among its other rather attractive features, it

serves to introduce his new female vocalist, Durelle Alexander, a singer of the mouse-like or Betty Boop type. *China Seas* is another one of Nacio Herb Brown's pseudo-Oriental numbers, all of which sound more or less alike. Bob Lawrence handles the vocal in his customarily competent style and the orchestration is suitably colorful.

* * * *

AA—*The Gentleman Obviously Doesn't Believe, and The Pig Got Up and Slowly Walked Away.* Rudy Vallee and his Connecticut Yankees. Victor 25192.

Two rather droll items, of English origin, we believe. Vallee is rather pompous in the former, a number quite unsuited to his rather specialized talents, but in the latter he treats us to no less than three distinct characterizations, a drunk, an English fop and a gentleman of Semitic extraction. All are done well enough and the band contributes some rather amusing business in the introduction. Musically, the disc is negligible, I fear, but it should be good for a snicker or two.

* * * *

HOT JAZZ

AAAA—*King Porter, and Sometimes I'm Happy.* Benny Goodman and his Orchestra. Victor 25090.

These are both elegant arrangements by Fletcher Henderson and reveal Goodman's great band at its very best. Bunny Berigan celebrates his entrance into the band by doing some of the same sort of work which has helped place him on the very top shelf of trumpet players, while Goodman's clarinet work remains one of the musical wonders of the age in its sheer perfection of style. The arrangements are incomparably subtle and they are played with superb musicianship and understanding.

* * * *

AAAA—*The Greener the Grass, and Melancholy Clown.* Reginald Foresythe and his Orchestra. Columbia D-3060.

Each new Foresythe disc is a little more interesting than the previous one. This record sets a new high, both as to the intrinsic merits of the compositions themselves and the performances afforded them. *Melancholy Clown*, a polytonal item which is not without its reminders of Stravinsky and Poulenc, is essentially an original and deft handling of a highly advanced and subtle idiom. *The Greener the Grass* in marked contrast, is a simple melody of great beauty and treated with complete simplicity and dignity. The band is simply magnificent, with Benny Goodman contributing some of his finest playing, and all the rest, notably Johnny Muenzenberger and Toots Mondello, quite outdo themselves.

AAAA—*St. Louis Blues, and 'Way Down Yonder in New Orleans.* Ray Noble and his Orchestra. Victor 25082.

Brilliant recordings and ones which are certain to appeal equally to the cognoscenti and to the general public, a knack which is peculiarly Noble's. His version of *St. Louis Blues* fairly blazes with excitement and would be a completely remarkable job if the last twenty-four bars or so weren't so very reminiscent of the Dorsey Brothers' arrangement of this indigo classic. This sort of thing cannot always be escaped, however, and the thing as a whole is stunningly individual in treatment. The reverse is a model of style and ingenuity and quite as good as anything he has ever done.

* * * *

AAA—*Honeysuckle Rose, and Old Fashioned Love.* Red Norvo and his Swing Septet. Columbia D-3059.

This is another of Norvo's highly distinctive recordings and deserves more mention than can possibly be given to it in a month exceptionally rich in hot recordings of merit. Both sides are in swing tempo and both depend to a large degree upon the quality of the solos, which are mostly first rate. Norvo once more plays the xylophone as no one in the world can, while the piano and tenor work of Teddy Wilson and "Chew" are notable.

* * * *

AAA—*Solo Hop, and In a Little Spanish Town.* Glen Miller and his Orchestra. Columbia D-3058.

Solo Hop is very loud and very fast, consisting mostly of hot solos, which is all to the good when they happen to be by Trumpeter Bunny Berigan and clarinetist Johnny Muenzenberger (or, as he is more briefly known to the musical confraternity, Minz). A bit of all right, these two, and any disc that either of them appears on is bound to have its moments. The reverse is in somewhat more restrained mood, at least to begin with, being a deftly handled satirical version, in 4-4 time, of the tremendously popular waltz tune of a decade ago.

* * * *

AA—*Nagasaki, and Jazz o' Jazz.* Adrian and his Tap Room Gang. Victor 25085.

This version of *Nagasaki* is the goofiest yet. It starts off rationally enough with Wingy Manone and Joe Marcello working nicely on trumpet and clarinet, but about half way through, Putney Danby, pianist, commences a series of maniacal yelps and animal noises which continue practically without interruption until the end and the like of which simply do not exist in the entire field of recorded music. *Jazz o' Jazz* brings the female vocalist (whose name is Jeanne Burns, by the way) to the fore once more and she impresses, in this number written by herself, as a singer of highly individual method.

Radio Notes

Four Thursdays during September promise interesting symphony concerts for radio listeners; at ten o'clock, E. D. S. T., the NBC Symphony will be heard each week under the baton of Frank Black. The following programs will be played:

Sept. 5—A Mozart program, consisting of the *Overture to Bastien and Bastienne*, the *Violin Concerto in D*, with Josef Stopak as soloist, and the *Symphony No. 28 in C Major*.

Sept. 12—A Richard Strauss program, consisting of the *Serenade in E Flat* and the incidental music to *Der Burger Als Edelmann*.

Sept. 19—A Rachmaninoff program: *The Piano Concerto No. 1 in F Sharp Minor* with Vladimir Brenner as soloist, and the orchestral tone-poem *The Isle of Death*.

Sept. 26—*The Planets*, suite for orchestra, by Gustav Holst.

* * * *

Frank Black's String Symphony concerts (Sunday evenings, 8 P. M., E. D. S. T.) continue to provide audiences with unusual and unfamiliar works.

Sept. 8—Opening movement from Beethoven's *Piano Sonata, Opus 28, Scenes from the Scottish Highlands* by Granville Bantock, and *Second Serenade for Strings* by Nicholas Sokolow.

Sept. 15—*Piano Sonata, Opus 31 No. 3*, by Beethoven, and *Serenade, Opus 85*, by Paul Juon.

Sept. 22—*Sarabande and Tambourin* by Leclair; *Serenade No. 2, in F*, by Volkmann; and *Suite, Opus 6*, by Josef Bloch.

* * * *

Following are some of the programs which will be heard during the next few weeks on the NBC Music Guild concerts:

Thursday, Sept. 5—*Quartet for Piano and Strings in G Minor* by Fauré; *Divertimento in A Major* by Haydn, Katherine Bacon and members of NBC Quartet.

Saturday, Sept. 7—*Quartet, Opus 74*, by Beethoven, played by the Perole String Quartet.

Tuesday, Sept. 10—*Quartet in A Minor* by Schumann, and *Suite in Ancient Style* by H. Waldo Warner, played by the Gordon Quartet.

Thursday, Sept. 12—*Quartet in D* by Roussel, *Night* by Ernest Bloch, played by the Roth Quartet.

Saturday, Sept. 14—*Cello Sonata, Opus 19*, by Rachmaninoff, played by Cornelius Van Vliet and Clarence Adler.

Tuesday, Sept. 17 — Brahms' *Piano Quintet in F Minor*, and Selections from *Art of the Fugue* by Bach, played by the Roth Quartet, with Josef Honti as soloist in the quintet.

Saturday, Sept. 21—*Quartet in G Minor* by Debussy, played by the Roth Quartet.

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SUNDAY

- 9:45 AM—Alden Elkins, baritone (NBC-WEAF)
 10:30 AM—Mildred Dilling, harpist (NBC-WEAF)
 10:30 AM—Walberg Brown String Ensemble (NBC-WJZ)
 11:00 AM—Amer. Art Trio (BBS-WOR)
 12:00 AM—Salt Lake City Choir and Organ (CBS-WABC)
 12:30 PM—Radio City Music Hall (NBC-WJZ)
 2:30 PM—Chicago A Capella Choir (NBC-WEAF)
 2:30 PM—National Light Opera Company (NBC-WJZ)
 3:00 PM—Salon Musicale (CBS-WABC)
 4:45 PM—Nina Tarasova (CBS-WABC)
 5:45 PM—Oswaldo Mazzuchi, cellist (NBC-WJZ)
 6:00 PM—Canadian Grenadier Band (NBC-WJZ)
 6:45 PM—Concert Miniatures (CBS-WABC)
 7:30 PM—Fireside Recital (NBC-WEAF)
 8:00 PM—Frank Black's String Symphony (NBC-WJZ)
 9:00 PM—"Forward America" — Drama and Music (CBS-WABC)

- 5:30 PM—James Wilkinson, baritone (NBC-WEAF)
 7:00 PM—Dinner Concert (NBC-WJZ)
 7:15 PM—He, She and They — Mary Eastman, Hubert Henry and Symphony Orchestra (CBS-WABC)
 9:00 PM—John Charles Thomas (NBC-WJZ)
 9:30 PM—Wallenstein's Sinfonietta (BBS-WOR)
 10:30 PM—Ray Noble's Orchestra (NBC-WEAF)

THURSDAY

- 11:30 AM—U. S. Navy Band (NBC-WJZ)
 1:15 PM—Rex Battle's Concert Ensemble (NBC-WEAF)
 1:30 PM—Concert Miniatures (CBS-WABC)
 2:30 PM—Music Guild (NBC-WJZ)
 5:30 PM—Matinee Musicale (NBC-WEAF)
 6:30 PM—Russian Orchestra (CBS-WABC)
 8:00 PM—Wallenstein's Impressions (BBS-WOR)
 10:00 PM—Paul Whitemans Music Hall (NBC-WEAF)
 10:00 PM—Frank Black and Symphony Orch. (NBC-WJZ)

MONDAY

- 1:15 PM—Lucille Manners, soprano; George Rasely, tenor (NBC-WEAF)
 1:30 PM—Rex Battle's Concert Ensemble (NBC-WEAF)
 2:30 PM—Music Guild (NBC-WJZ)
 5:30 PM—Alice in Orchestralia (NBC-WEAF)
 6:00 PM—U. S. Army Band (NBC-WJZ)
 6:35 PM—Carol Deis, soprano (NBC-WEAF)
 8:30 PM—Daly's Orchestra (NBC-WEAF)
 11:30 PM—Ray Noble's Orchestra (NBC-WJZ)

TUESDAY

- 1:45 PM—Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
 2:45 PM—Viennese Sextet (NBC-WJZ)
 4:30 PM—Piano Recital (NBC-WJZ)
 5:00 PM—Walberg Brown String Ensemble (NBC-WJZ)
 5:30 PM—Era Symphony Orchestra (NBC-WEAF)
 6:00 PM—Bavarian Orchestra (NBC-WJZ)
 6:30 PM—Russian Orchestra (CBS-WABC)
 8:00 PM—Little Symphony Orchestra (BBS-WOR)
 9:30 PM—Russian Symphonic Choir (NBC-WJZ)

WEDNESDAY

- 11:00 AM—Piano Recital (NBC-WEAF)
 11:15 AM—Dorothy Dreslein, soprano (NBC-WEAF)
 11:30 PM—U. S. Army Band (NBC-WJZ)
 1:30 PM—Concert Miniatures (CBS-WABC)
 2:00 PM—Chandler Goldthwaite Ensemble (NBC-WEAF)
 4:45 PM—Mexican Marimba Orchestra (NBC-WEAF)

FRIDAY

- 11:00 AM—U. S. Navy Band (NBC-WEAF)
 11:30 AM—Bavarian Orch. (NBC-WJZ)
 2:30 PM—Rosa Linda, pianist (NBC-WJZ)
 3:34 PM—Mario Cozzi, baritone (NBC-WEAF)
 4:30 PM—Viennese Sextet (NBC-WJZ)
 5:15 PM—Melodic Moments (CBS-WABC)
 7:00 PM—Dinner Concert (NBC-WJZ)
 8:00 PM—Bourdon's Orchestra, Jessica Dragonette (NBC-WEAF)
 8:15 PM—Lucile Manners, soprano (NBC-WJZ)
 10:30 PM—The Music Box (BBS-WOR)
 10:30 PM—Lois Ravel with Leith Stevens' Orch. (CBS-WABC)

SATURDAY

- 10:30 AM—Mathay Gypsy Orch. (NBC-WEAF)
 11:30 AM—Whitney Ensemble (NBC-WJZ)
 12:15 PM—Fonariova, soprano (NBC-WJZ)
 2:00 PM—Rex Battle's Concert Ensemble (NBC-WEAF)
 2:30 PM—Walberg Brown String Ensemble (NBC-WEAF)
 3:00 PM—On the Village Green, Barlow and Orch. (CBS-WABC)
 3:30 PM—Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
 4:00 PM—Carol Deis, soprano (NBC-WEAF)
 4:00 PM—Alma Schirmer, pianist (NBC-WJZ)
 5:30 PM—Chicago A Capella Choir
 6:35 PM—Alma Kitchell, contralto (NBC-WEAF)
 7:00 PM—Mary Eastman and Concert Orchestra (CBS-WABC)
 8:00 PM—The Hit Parade (NBC-WEAF)
 9:00 PM—Howard Barlow, Soloists and Sym. Orchestra (CBS-WABC)
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